

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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News Release



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ARTHUR R. MARSHALL LOXAHATCHEE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Refuge Reopens Canoe Trail

The Everglades Canoe Trail at the A.R.M. Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge will reopen to the public on Saturday, March 31, 2001, Refuge Manager Mark J. Musaus announced today. The trail has been closed for several weeks due to low water levels. The 5.5 mile trail into the interior of the refuge offers a unique opportunity for refuge visitors to view the wildlife and wildlands of the northern Everglades firsthand with little disruption by human-made sights and sounds.

Access to the Canoe Trail is from the Headquarters Area on Lee Road off U.S. 441, 2 miles south of Boynton Beach Boulevard or 3 miles north of Delray Beach's Atlantic Avenue. The trail is for nonmotorized watercraft only. Refuge visitors must furnish their own canoe and life jackets or cushions. Canoeists should allow between 4 to 5 hours to complete the 5.5 mile loop trail and it is recommended that canoeists carry rain gear, insect repellent, sunscreen, drinking water, and high energy snack food. Refuge hours are currently 6:00 AM to 7:00 PM and canoeists should plan accordingly.

Canoe Trail information is available in the refuge Visitor Center which is open 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM from

Wednesday through Friday and from 9 AM to 4:30 PM on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. There is an entrance fee of \$5.00 per vehicle or \$1.00 per pedestrian. Seasonal passes are also available. For more information call the Visitor Center at (561) 734-8303.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsibility for conserving, protecting, and enhancing fish and wildlife and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 93-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System comprised of more than 500 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands, and other special management areas. It also operates 66 national fish hatcheries, 64 fish and wildlife management offices, and 78 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces Federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Aid program that distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.